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FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

LS 6670

BILL NUMBER: HB 1366

NOTE PREPARED: Jan 27, 2011

BILL AMENDED: Jan 27, 2011

SUBJECT: Northwest Indiana Bus Commission.

FIRST AUTHOR: Rep. Soliday

FIRST SPONSOR:

BILL STATUS: CR Adopted - 1st House

FUNDS AFFECTED: **GENERAL**
 DEDICATED
 FEDERAL

IMPACT: Local

Summary of Legislation: The bill requires a regional transportation authority of which Lake County is a member to be named the Northwest Indiana Bus Commission (NIBC).

It establishes the membership of the NIBC, and it establishes the membership of the NIBC Board.

The bill requires the executive director of the NIBC to have at least seven years experience in public transportation at a senior executive level.

It also requires the NIBC board to submit a biennial fiscal plan to the Lake County fiscal body.

The bill repeals definitions of "regional bus authority" and "regional bus authority project".

Effective Date: July 1, 2011.

Explanation of State Expenditures:

Explanation of State Revenues:

Explanation of Local Expenditures: If the current executive director does not meet the criteria established in the bill, it may result in minimal one-time costs for the NIBC for an executive director search. The criteria is that the executive director have at least seven years experience in public transportation at a senior executive level. If this qualification results in higher compensation requirements for the position, the NIBC would incur additional operating expense. Additionally, the bill requires the board of the NIBC to submit

a fiscal plan to the fiscal body of Lake County. This too could minimally add to the operating expense of the NIBC.

(Revised) The bill allows Porter County and any city within the county with population greater than 19,000 to become a member of the NIBC. This replaces a similar membership authority for LaPorte County and second class cities in that county and is expected to have no fiscal impact. [The cities that would qualify in Porter County are Portage and Valparaiso.]

Background: *The Northwest Indiana Regional Bus Authority:* The Northwest Indiana Regional Bus Authority (NIRBA) evolved out of the Regional Transportation Committee and the Regional Transportation Authority established by the Lake County Council with enabling statutes in state law. While the NIRBA has no permanent source of financing, from 2006 to 2008, the NIRBA has received grants of about \$3.3M from the Northwestern Indiana Regional Development Authority (NWIRDA). The NIRBA has provided bus studies for NWIRDA. In January 2010, the NIRBA began operating the Hammond Transit System and in February 2010, it established an express route between Dyer and Chicago. The NIRBA has provided coordination of demand response dispatch in Lake and Porter Counties. Under the bill, the NIRBA would be repealed and replaced with the NIBC.

(Revised) *The NIBC Board:* In statute, there are two compositions of the board for a regional bus authority. Under the bill, one composition that is contingent upon both Lake County and Porter County being members of the Northern Indiana Regional Transportation District is repealed, and in its place a new composition is created for the NIBC in Lake County. Under the bill, the board would be comprised of the county executive of Lake County and the executives of each municipality with a population greater than 19,000 located in Lake County. This would include the cities of Crown Point, East Chicago, Gary, Hammond, and Hobart, and the towns of Highland, Merrillville, Munster, and Schererville. The executive could designate an alternative member who has at least five years experience in transportation management, fiscal planning, or urban planning and at least five years experience as the member of another board.

Explanation of Local Revenues:

State Agencies Affected:

Local Agencies Affected: Lake and Porter Counties.

Information Sources: NIRBA Annual Report at http://www.rba-nwi.org/docs/reports/RBA_Annual_Report_2009.pdf; 2008 State Board of Accounts Audit Report at <http://www.in.gov/sboa>.

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